



Friends of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday, Nov. 10, 2021 6:30 p.m. Remote via Zoom

Present: Ellie Bailey, secretary, Doug Chickering, vice president, Bill Gette, president, Lynette Leka, treasurer, Ted Olsson, vice president, Weston Forsblad, Peg Gould, MaryMargaret Halsey, Dave Williams, Cheryl Smith, associate member, Matt Hillman, refuge manager, Matt Poole, visitor services, Dan Graovac.

1. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 6:35 by President Bill Gette.
2. Secretary's Report. The minutes of the Oct. 6, 2021 meeting were accepted. Action items from the Oct. 6 meeting were reported as follows.
 - *Ellie sent the Sept. minutes to Weston and the Artist of the Month guidelines to Ted.
 - *There was no action on the diversity guide.
 - *Regarding the mowing of the fields, Matt Hillman explained that, in accordance with the Habitat Management Plan, field mowing is not taking place. The priority is the salt marsh habitat and resources are being focused in that area.
 - *The internal audit revealed that all is in order with names/signatures on bank accounts and other financial matters.
 - *Bill has 3" metal letters for the Hellcat trail at a cost of \$363.38.
 - *Ted routinely links Friends website articles to our Facebook page.
 - *The Plank Project flyer and order form went out on schedule.
 - *MaryMargaret has spoken to the new director of the Greater Newburyport Chamber of Commerce about the Chamber becoming a member of the Friends and will follow up with him as soon as possible. Discussion revealed that the Friends membership in the Chamber was renewed this year and that benefits, mainly publicity, merit belonging for another year.
3. Refuge Staff Update. Matt Poole reported as follows.
 - *Refuge programs are all either remote via Zoom or outside. Friends are encouraged to co-sponsor/co-promote our programs with the refuge.

**The Wrackline* will come out in early Jan. of 2022 with a Dec. 15 deadline. Friends are encouraged to write articles. Bill Gette volunteered to write an article on Friends activities in 2021, Dave Williams will write on the Winter Birding Challenge and Doug will write on the “remarkable shore bird migration” of this year. Photos should not be pasted in articles. Send copy/graphics to Matt Poole.

*Matt echoed staff praise and thanks for all the Wed. Work Group has accomplished.

*The urban audience initiative, an on-going program, has increased support from the Biden administration.

*Doug brought up a problem with visitors to the refuge picking winterberry. Matt will ask Jean to put the “please don’t pick” poster in the A-frame. Rather than confront visitors, Matt P. and Matt H. suggested taking a photo (discretely) of the picker in action and also of his/her license plate and sending same to headquarters.

*The Parker River Refuge will be closed Dec. 1 & 2 for deer hunting.

4. Board Reports

A. Treasurer’s Report. Lynette sent out her report ahead of the meeting. She noted that our financial position is very good due to the sale of 45 planks as well as a net increase of 15 memberships for a total of 264. The Board may soon want to decide on the allocation of this revenue.

B. President’s Report. Bill reported that projects for the Wed. Work Group recently included clearing debris and leaf blowing at the Hellcat trail. They also cut up and transported the six foot planks for the Pine’s Trail plank project and will work on installation, weather permitting.

A brief discussion of Refuge Week focussed on letting visitors know what activities we are offering. For next year, Matt Hillman offered a banner at the gate and Matt Poole suggested an A-frame sign. Dave reported that visitors are primarily interested in history, plants and animals.

C. Technology Report. Weston noted that he has changed a few homepage postings and has posted the most recent minutes.

5. StoryWalk Summary. Feedback on the StoryWalk has been positive. Ted will do a reflective summary for the Dec. meeting.

6. Annual Meeting. Bill has scheduled our Annual Meeting for Jan. 22 at 10 a.m. It will most likely be remote via Zoom. He will speak on winter raptors and the presentation format will be the same as in 2021. Lynette will check on procedures used last year for voting. Matt H. will send his report to Bill by Jan. 14.

7. Plank Project. Ted reported that the next batch of planks will most likely be going to the engraver in Jan. The event is being publicized via flyers and forms on Facebook, our website, and the Lot 1 kiosk. If necessary we can increase our advertising but so far orders are coming in

steadily. Dan Graovac offered to post flyers/forms on the Merrimac Valley Watershed Council's website. Ted will send him the information.

8. Winter Birding Challenge. Dave stated that existing guidelines can be reused with the following changes: 1. Two prize categories, beginner (birding less than a year) and advanced (birding over a year). 2. A reduction in prize money. The challenge will be Feb. 12 - Feb. 18. Lynette suggested giving a snowy owl stuffy as a prize as well. Dave and Bill will meet via Zoom to update materials a.s.a.p.

9. Friends Articles and Publicity. Bill will work on Cheryl's articles.

10. Educational Program Calendar. Doug will send Bill a report on the Pop-up programs he did.

11. Guidelines (for art submitted for posting on the website by non-Board members). Ted reported that he has written and sent guidelines to the Board for review/comment. Once art is received, the Friends president could delegate review. He will resend for comment.

12. Meeting Dates: Dec. 15 @ 6:30 and Jan. 19 @ 6:30

13. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Action Items

*MaryMargaret will follow up with the new Chamber director a.s.a.p.

*Bill Gette will write an article on Friends activities in 2021 for the *Wrackline* & send to Matt P. by Dec. 15.

*Dave Williams will write an article on the Winter Birding Challenge for the *Wrackline* and send to Matt P. by Dec. 15.

*Doug will write an article for the *Wrackline* on the "remarkable shore bird migration" of this year and send to Matt P. by Dec. 15.

*Ted will do a reflective summary of the StoryWalk for the next meeting.

*Ted will send Dan information on the plank project and Dan will post it on MVWC website.

*Dave & Bill will update Winter Birding materials.

*Bill will work on Cheryl's articles.

*Doug will send his report on Pop-up programs to Bill.

*Ted will resend guidelines for artists.

*Lynette will review balloting procedures

*Matt H. will send his Annual Meeting presentation to Bill by Jan. 14.

Respectfully submitted,
Eleanor Bailey
Secretary

